1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1



and when of tribal identity was rarely answerable, so short is tribal memory, so vainglorious its love of legend, so vague its sense of time and place. Some tribes were, evidently, consolidated groups of mere neighbours of the same valley or river reach—Zibari or Sawamara. Others sprang from a community formed at an oasis, well, or shrine, with all the accretions, soon assimilated, which a secure livelihood would invite. In others, the bond of original kinship, retained effectively by the ruling family, had been spread wider by intermarriage within the group, and was claimed in sentiment by hundreds of loyal adopted kinsmen admitted, over centuries, from without. Historical or imagined kinship was and is, indeed, the essence of the tribal nucleus.

The size of a tribe could vary from a few tents to great confederacies embracing, with greater or lesser integration, a dozen tribes all under a single paramountcy. But of no aspect of tribal life was it, or is it, more difficult to speak precisely than of the tribe's internal organization or solidarity, or lack of these. One authority is 'under' another only by virtue of admired qualities, birth, age, and consent; and such subjection is always unstable. The Western mind is for ever puzzled by the fragility of tribal authority, upon the skill and firmness of which everything in the tribe would seem to depend.

Amid their many elements of variety, the tribes were uniform in the fundamentals of their outlook, their level stages of evolution, their common feeling of distinctness from the governed townsfolk; and their power for good or evil was enhanced by the remarkable range of personalities whom the scope of their free society allowed to emerge. Whatever the townsman of Baghdad or Mosul might feel about the wildness or avarice of his tribal fellow countrymen—whom he would reluctantly admit as such—he must needs confess the force and individuality of many of the Shaykhs: qualities found equally in a great Shaykh of desert 'Aniza or Shammar, the lord of a few sordid reed huts in the Ḥammar Lake, an Amir of the Rabi'a or Zubayd, or the Aghā of a Kurdish countryside.

For all the tumult of their restless politics and feuds, the tribes' material and social state in 1900 might well seem to an observer fundamentally unchanged for centuries. Yet in fact changes had been long at work: the same, in essence, as were moving among the town populations, and due to the same impacts of the time. The Turkish conception of government had changed, control of tribal areas had replaced mere tax-farming as the objective, modern military forces had become available. Even tribesmen could not be ignorant that Courts had been set up which at least claimed universal jurisdiction, criminals were demanded from their tribal refuges, a Mudir and his handful of *Zaptié* (*ḍhabṭiya*) could appear

8:Campbell T-5 (no date) 1949 MH1 Iraq MH1



she pretended to be Sheikh Mizeil el Qurnachi's page boy rather than his daughter. And she said: As for Sheikh Mizeil's beautiful daughter, I know not what became of her. Perhaps she has thrown herself in the river to escape from shame. And the Sheikh spoke and said: This affair shall be my affair, for I know Sheikh Mizeil's name, and I think there is some blood connection between us and that we are distant cousins, and does not the poet say:

A man has cousins,
They are like his wings.
Can then the hawk,
Fly without wings?

And when the food was eaten Sheikh Aqab ordered that the page boy be given a hair tent of his own to sleep in, and he whispered to Abood el Matrood: Guard her well in the night. Then the Sheikh sat in his own tent, passing his rosary through his fingers, thinking: How can I overcome the sequin seller and release Mizeil from the Turks, that I may earn the love of this girl? And by the time that the Star of Dawn was clear he had formed a plan. And when the first glow of dawn was in the East the Sheikh ordered the striking of the camp, and they took to the road, and as for their destination, it was Baghdad.

And on the morning of the second day the merchant Jassim rose from his bed and left his house and went to his shop as was his custom, and he called his assistants and slaves and shop boys and asked them and said: Have you yet found this runaway girl, daughter of the traitor Mizeil, and did you search for her throughout the night? And they replied: Master, we have searched every quarter in Baghdad, yet we cannot find her. Yet there is a matter of which we desire to acquaint you, for it fills us with fear, and that is that last night after you had left the shop there